



Update to the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields

State of Minnesota

Washington, DC
December 2010



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U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
American Battlefield Protection Program

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Authority

The American Battlefield Protection Program Act of 1996, as amended by the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-359, 111 Stat. 3016, 17 December 2002), directs the Secretary of the Interior to update the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields*.

Acknowledgments

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Cover: View of the seasonal (dry) lake bed at **Wood Lake** battlefield. The lake bed is a defining feature on the landscape and was the location of the Federal encampment.

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Introduction

The information in this report fulfills, in part, the purposes of the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-359, 111 Stat. 3016). Those purposes are:

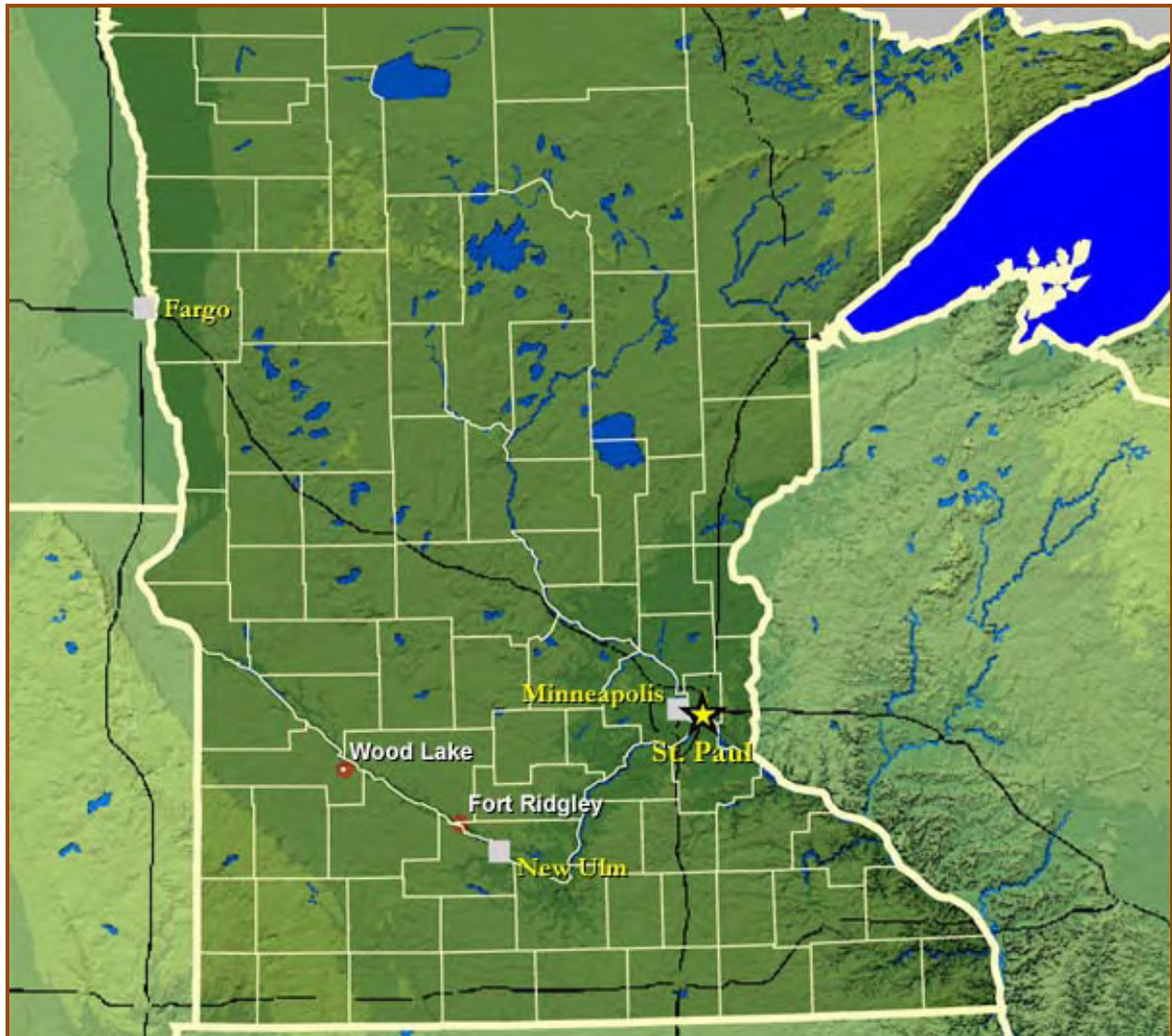
- 1) to act quickly and proactively to preserve and protect nationally significant Civil War battlefields through conservation easements and fee-simple purchases of those battlefields from willing sellers; and
- 2) to create partnerships among state and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and enhance nationally significant Civil War battlefields.

The Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002 directs the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) of the National Park Service, to update the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields*. The CWSAC was established by Congress in 1991 and published its report in 1993. Congress provided funding for this update in FY2005 and FY2007. Congress asked that the updated report reflect the following:

- Preservation activities carried out at the 384 battlefields identified by the CWSAC during the period between 1993 and the update;
- Changes in the condition of the battlefields during that period; and
- Any other relevant developments relating to the battlefields during that period.

In accordance with the legislation, this report presents information about Civil War battlefields in Minnesota for use by Congress, federal, state, and local government agencies, landowners, and other interest groups. Other state reports will be issued as surveys and analyses are completed.

Figure 1. **Fort Ridgley** and **Wood Lake** are the two CWSAC battlefields in Minnesota.



Synopsis

There are two CWSAC battlefields in Minnesota: **Fort Ridgely** and **Wood Lake**. Historically, these battlefields encompassed more than 2,500 acres.¹ Today, one hundred percent (100%) of the historic landscapes associated with these battles retain their historic character.²

In 1993, the CWSAC used a four-tiered system that combined historic significance, current condition, and level of threat to determine priorities for preservation among the battlefields. While the CWSAC did not physically survey the two Minnesota battlefields in 1993, they did rank them within their four-tier system. The CWSAC ranked both battlefields as needing additional protection, placing them in the third tier of preservation priorities. Today, the landscape and setting of **Wood Lake** have changed little from the time of the battle. While portions of **Fort Ridgely's** landscape have been altered, most essential features remain.

After surveying the battlefields for this updated report, the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) has found that the entire Study Areas of both **Fort Ridgely** and **Wood Lake** maintain integrity. **Wood Lake's** landscape is nearly pristine, marred only by a few residential buildings and farm structures. At **Fort Ridgely** modern residential buildings and farm structures intrude on the landscape and kaolin and gravel mining in the area threaten to alter the battlefield's topography. Construction associated with the refurbishment of a 1920's era golf course located within the Fort Ridgely State Park, is also of concern. Additional changes to the landscapes of both battlefields will continue as large farms are subdivided into smaller parcels. Due to the isolated locations of the two battlefields, subdivision can be considered a long-term threat.



Figure 2: View of Sioux positions along the bluffs to the north of the Minnesota Volunteers' camp at **Wood Lake** battlefield. Photograph by Paul Hawke, 2007.

¹Using a GIS program, the ABPP calculated that the Study Areas for the two battlefields in Minnesota represent 2,501.04 acres.

² Using a GIS program, the ABPP calculated that the Potential National Register Boundaries for the two battlefields in Minnesota represent 2,501.04 acres.

Method Statement

Congress instructed the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), to report on changes in the condition of the battlefields since 1993 and on “preservation activities” and “other relevant developments” carried out at each battlefield since 1993. To fulfill those assignments, the ABPP 1) conducted a site survey of each battlefield, and 2) prepared and sent out questionnaires to battlefield managers and advocacy organizations (see Appendix D).

Research and Field Surveys

The surveys entailed additional historical research, on-the-ground documentation and assessment of site conditions, identification of impending threats to each site, and site mapping. Surveyors used a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver to map historic features of each battlefield and used a Geographic Information System (GIS) program to draw site boundaries. The ABPP retains all final survey materials. Each battlefield survey file includes a survey form (field notes, list of defining features, list of documentary sources, and a photo log), photographs, spatial coordinates of significant features, and boundaries described on USGS topographic maps. The surveys did not include archeological investigations for reasons of time and expense.

Study Areas and Core Areas

The CWSAC identified a Study Area and a Core Area for each of the principal battlefields it surveyed (see Figure 3). The CWSAC boundaries have proven invaluable as guides to local land and resource preservation efforts at Civil War battlefields. Since 1993 however, the National Park Service has refined its battlefield survey methodology, which include research, working with site stewards, identifying and documenting lines of approach and withdrawal used by opposing forces, and applying the concepts of military terrain analysis to all battlefield landscapes. The ABPP’s *Battlefield Survey Manual* explains the field methods employed during this study.³ The surveys also incorporate the concepts recommended in the National Register of Historic Places’ *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America’s Historic Battlefields*, which was published in 1992 after the CWSAC completed its original assessments of the battlefields.⁴

Using its refined methodology, ABPP was able to research and delineate new boundaries on the previously un-surveyed Civil War battlefields in Minnesota (see Table 1). At each of the battlefields, application of the refined methodology resulted a Study Area and Core Area that reflect the historical area of the battle and area of heaviest fighting respectively. It is important to note that the Study Area and Core Area boundaries are simply historical boundaries that describe where the battle took place; neither indicates the current integrity of the battlefield landscape, so neither can be used on its own to identify surviving portions of battlefield land that may merit protection and preservation.

³ American Battlefield Protection Program, “Battlefield Survey Manual,” (Washington, DC: National Park Service, revised 2007).

⁴ National Register Bulletin 40, *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America’s Historic Battlefields*, 1992, Revised 1999 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division).

Potential National Register Boundaries

To address the question of what part of the battlefield remains reasonably intact and warrants preservation, this study introduced a third boundary line that was not attempted by the CWSAC: the Potential National Register boundary (see Figure 3).

Looking at each Study Area, the surveyors assigned PotNR boundaries where they judged that the landscape retained enough integrity to convey the significance of the historic battle. In a few cases, the PotNR boundary encompasses the entire Study Area. In most cases, however, the PotNR boundary includes less land than identified in the full Study Area.

In assigning PotNR boundaries, the ABPP followed National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) guidelines when identifying and mapping areas that retain integrity and cohesion within the Study Areas.⁵ Because the ABPP focuses only on areas of battle however, the Program did not evaluate lands adjacent to the Study Area that may contribute to a broader historical and chronological definition of “cultural landscape.” Lands outside of the Study Area associated with other historic events and cultural practices may need to be evaluated in preparation for a formal nomination of the cultural landscape.

Most importantly, the PotNR boundary **does not constitute a formal determination of eligibility by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places**.⁶ The PotNR boundary is designed to be used as a planning tool for government agencies and the public. Like the Study and Core Area boundaries, the PotNR boundary places no restriction on private property use.

The term integrity, as defined by the NRHP, is “the ability of a property to convey its

Figure 3: Boundary Definitions

The **Study Area** represents the historic extent of the battle as it unfolded across the landscape. The Study Area contains resources known to relate to or contribute to the battle event: where troops maneuvered and deployed, immediately before, during, and after combat, and where they fought during combat. Historic accounts, terrain analysis, and feature identification inform the delineation of the Study Area boundary. The Study Area indicates the extent to which historic and archeological resources associated with the battle (areas of combat, command, communications, logistics, medical services, etc.) may be found. Surveyors delineated Study Area boundaries for every battle site that was positively identified through research and field survey, regardless of its present integrity.

The **Core Area** represents the areas of fighting on the battlefield. Positions that delivered or received fire, and the intervening space and terrain between them, fall within the Core Area. Frequently described as “hallowed ground,” land within the Core Area is often the first to be targeted for protection. There may be more than one Core Area on a battlefield, but all lie within the Study Area.

Unlike the Study and Core Areas, which are based only upon the interpretation of historic events, the **Potential National Register (PotNR) boundary** represents ABPP’s assessment of a Study Area’s current integrity (the surviving landscape and features that convey the site’s historic sense of place). The PotNR boundary may include all or some of the Study Area, and all or some of the Core Area. Lands within PotNR boundaries should be considered worthy of further attention, although future evaluations may reveal more or less integrity than indicated by the ABPP surveys.

⁵ For general guidance about integrity issues and National Register of Historic Places properties, see National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, revised 1997). The survey evaluations described above do not meet the more stringent integrity standards for National Historic Landmark designation. See National Park Service, *How to Prepare National Historic Landmark Nominations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1999), 36-37.

⁶ See 36 CFR 60.1-14 for regulations about nominating a property to the National Register of Historic Places and 36 CFR 63 for regulations concerning Determinations of Eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

significance.”⁷ While assessments of integrity are traditionally based on seven specific attributes – location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association – battlefields are unique cultural resources and require special evaluation.” Generally, the most important aspects of integrity for battlefields are location, setting, feeling and association,” and the most basic test for determining the integrity of any battlefield is to assess “whether a participant in the battle would recognize the property as it exists today.”⁸

Other conditions contribute to the *degree* of integrity a battlefield retains:

- the quantity and quality of surviving battle-period resources (e.g., buildings, roads, fence lines, military structures, and archeological features);
- the quantity and quality of the spatial relationships between and among those historic resources and the landscape that connects them;
- the extent to which current battlefield land use is similar to battle-period land use; and
- the extent to which a battlefield’s physical features and overall character visually communicates an authentic sense of the sweep and setting of the battle.

The degree to which post-war development has altered and fragmented the historic landscape or destroyed historic features and viewsheds is critical when assessing integrity.

Changes in traditional land use over time do not generally diminish a battlefield’s integrity. For example, landscapes that were farmland during the Civil War do not need to be in agricultural use today to be considered eligible for listing in the NRHP so long as the land retains its historic rural character. Similarly, natural changes in vegetation – woods growing out of historic farm fields, for example – do not necessarily lessen the landscape’s integrity.

Some post-battle development is expected; slight or moderate change within the battlefield may not substantially diminish a battlefield’s integrity. A limited degree of residential, commercial, or industrial development is acceptable. These post-battle “non-contributing” elements are often included in the PotNR boundary in accordance with NRHP guidelines.⁹

Significant changes in land use since the Civil War do diminish the integrity of the battlefield landscape. Heavy residential, commercial, and industrial development; cellular tower and wind turbine installation; and large highway construction are common examples of such changes. Battlefield landscapes with these types of changes are generally considered as having little or no integrity.

⁷ National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 40, *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America’s Historic Battlefields*, 1992 , Revised 1999 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division), <http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/NRB40.pdf>. Archeological integrity was not examined during this study, but should be considered in future battlefield studies and formal nominations to the National Register.

⁸ National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 40, *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America’s Historic Battlefields*, 1992 , Revised 1999 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division).

⁹ The ABPP looks only at the battle-related elements of a cultural landscape. Post-battle elements, while not contributing to the significance of the battlefield, may be eligible for separate listing in the National Register on their own merits.

The PotNR boundaries therefore indicate which battlefields are *likely* eligible for future listing in the NRHP and *likely* deserving of future preservation efforts. If a surveyor determined that a battlefield was entirely compromised by land use incompatible with the preservation of historic features (i.e., it has little or no integrity), the ABPP did not assign a PotNR boundary.¹⁰

In cases where a battlefield is already listed in the NRHP, surveyors reassessed the existing documentation based on current scholarship and resource integrity, and, when appropriate, provided new information and proposed new boundaries as part of the surveys. As a result, some PotNR boundaries will contain or share a boundary with lands already listed in the NRHP. In other cases, PotNR boundaries will exclude listed lands that have lost integrity (see Table 3.)¹¹

The data from which all three boundaries are drawn do not necessarily reflect the full research needed for a formal NRHP nomination. PotNR boundaries are based on an assessment of aboveground historic features associated with the cultural and natural landscape. The surveys did not include a professional archeological inventory or assessment of subsurface features or indications. In some cases, future archeological testing will help determine whether subsurface features remain, whether subsurface battle features convey important information about a battle or historic property, and whether that information may help to confirm, refine, or refute the boundaries previously determined by historic studies and terrain analysis.

The ABPP survey information should be reassessed during future compliance processes such as the Section 106 process required by the National Historic Preservation Act¹² and Environmental Impact Statements/Environmental Assessments required by the National Environmental Policy Act.¹³ Likewise, more detailed research and assessments should take place when any battlefield is formally nominated to the NRHP or proposed for designation as a National Historic Landmark (NHL). New research and intensive-level surveys of these sites will enlighten future preservation and compliance work. Agencies should continue to consult local and state experts for up-to-date information about these battlefields.

On the **Fort Ridgely** battlefield, the 440 acres of the Fort Ridgely State Park have been listed in the NRHP. The area was listed for its overall place in history and not specifically for the Civil War battle.

1,113.38 acres of the **Wood Lake** battlefield was listed in the NRHP in 2010 as the Wood Lake Battlefield Historic District. The area was specifically listed as a battlefield landscape for its association with the Civil War battle of **Wood Lake**.

¹⁰ National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 40, *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields*, 1992, Revised 1999 (<http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/NRB40.pdf>), offers recommendations regarding "Selecting Defensible Boundaries." While this document indicates that "generally, boundaries should not be drawn to include the portion of the route taken to the battlefield where there were no encounters," the *Guidelines* also state that "a basic principle is to include within the boundary all of the locations where opposing forces, either before, during or after the battle, took actions based on their assumption of being in the presence of the enemy." The ABPP interprets this latter guidance to mean all military activities that influenced the battle. See the individual battlefield profiles for information about military actions taken along the routes included. In accordance with the methodology of this study, if routes included in the Study Area retain integrity, they are included within the Potential National Register boundary for the battlefield landscape.

¹¹ The ABPP's surveys and PotNR assessments do not constitute formal action on behalf of the office of the National Register of Historic Places. PotNR assessments are intended for planning purposes only; they do not carry the authority to add, change, or remove an official listing.

¹² 16 USC 470f.

¹³ 42 USC 4331-4332.

Questionnaires

While the ABPP maintains data about its own program activities at Civil War battlefields, most preservation work occurs at the local level. Therefore, to answer Congress's directive for information about battlefield preservation activities, the ABPP sought input from local battlefield managers and advocacy organizations. The ABPP distributed questionnaires designed to gather information about the types of preservation activities that have taken place at the battlefields since 1993. The Questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix D.

In Minnesota, representatives from two organizations provided information. Their responses, combined with the survey findings, allowed the ABPP to create a profile of conditions and activities at **Fort Ridgely** and **Wood Lake**.



Figure 4. The ravine used by the Santee Sioux to advance on **Fort Ridgely** from the north. The ravine is within the boundaries of Fort Ridgely State Park. Photograph by Paul Hawke, 2007

Summary of Conditions of Civil War Battlefields in Minnesota

Quantified Land Areas

Using a Geographic Information Systems program, the ABPP calculated the amount of land historically associated with the battle (Study Area), the amount of land where forces were engaged (Core Area), and the amount of land that may retain enough integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and that remains to be protected (Potential National Register boundary).

As noted above and as Table 1 illustrates, the Study Areas and Core Areas of Minnesota's Civil War battlefields have been established in accordance with ABPP research and field survey methodology. Particular attention was paid to identifying the routes of approach and withdrawal associated with each battle, and to identifying areas of secondary action that influenced the course or outcome of the battles.¹⁴ The Study Area and Core Area boundaries established for each battlefield take these movements and actions into account, recognizing the extent to which these ancillary areas serve as battlefield features.

Table 1. Battlefield Area Statistics

Battlefield	Study Area	Core Area	PotNR Boundary
Fort Ridgely (MN001)	1,307.13	242.85	1,307.13
Wood Lake (MN002)*	1,774.99	701.24	1,774.99

*No CWSAC boundaries were established in 1993. The ABPP established new boundaries in 2010.

Condition Assessments

Using field survey data, the ABPP assessed the overall condition of each battlefield's *Study Area*.¹⁵ While no battlefield remains completely unaltered since the Civil War, **Wood Lake** has suffered little alteration to the character-defining features of its landscape. Portions of **Fort Ridgely's** landscape has been altered by mining and development, but most of its battlefield defining features remain intact.

Wood Lake is in excellent condition. Land use here is little changed since the time of the Civil War. Only a few modern residences and roads intrude on the landscape. Subdivision of large farms into smaller parcels could pose a threat to the battlefield, but changes to the landscape appear to be slow and accumulative.

Fort Ridgely is in very good condition with some modern intrusions, but the topography still easily conveys the landscape's historic character. Within the Study Area, the State of

¹⁴ National Register Bulletin 40, *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields* (<http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/NRB40.pdf>), offers recommendations regarding "Selecting Defensible Boundaries." While this document indicates that "generally, boundaries should not be drawn to include the portion of the route taken to the battlefield where there were no encounters," the *Guidelines* also state that "a basic principle is to include within the boundary all of the locations where opposing forces, either before, during or after the battle, took actions based on their assumption of being in the presence of the enemy." The ABPP interprets this latter guidance to mean all military activities that influenced the battle. See the individual battlefield profiles for information about military actions taken along the routes included. In accordance with the methodology of this study, if routes included in the Study Area retain integrity, they are included within the Potential National Register boundary for the battlefield landscape.

¹⁵ The condition of archeological resources within the battlefields was not assessed. Future studies are needed to determine the degree of archeological integrity associated with subsurface battle deposits.

Minnesota's Fort Ridgely State Park encompasses more than 649 acres, 20 acres of which are administered by the Minnesota Historical Society as the Fort Ridgely Historic Site. The remaining 629 acres of the state park are used for recreation. Amenities include a 1920's era nine hole golf course, camping and picnic areas, and a playground. In 2007, construction was begun on the restoration of the nine hole golf course which surrounds the 20 acre historic site. Modern construction methods could present a threat to the landscape around the fort and may result in damage to the battlefield terrain and archeological resources. Gravel and kaolin mining impact the battlefield and any new mines will decimate portions of the landscape. There is also new residential construction in the area as farms subdivide into smaller parcels.

Table 2. Condition Summary

Condition	Battlefield
Land use is little Changed (1)	Wood Lake
Portions of landscape have been altered, but most essential features remain (1)	Fort Ridgely
Much of the landscape has been altered and fragmented, leaving some essential features (0)	N/A
Landscape and terrain have been altered beyond recognition (0)	N/A
Battlefields that were not assessed (0)	N/A

Registration

The nation's official method for recognizing historic properties worthy of preservation is listing in the NRHP. Registered battlefields (those listed in the NRHP) meet national standards for documentation, physical integrity, and demonstrable significance to the history of our nation. Federal, state, and local agencies use information from the NRHP as a planning tool to identify and make decisions about cultural resources. Federal and state laws, most notably Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, require agencies to account for the effects their projects (roads, wetland permits, quarrying, cell towers, etc.) may have on listed and eligible historic properties, such as battlefields. Listing allows project designers to quickly identify the battlefield and avoid or minimize impacts to the landscape.

Properties listed in the NRHP may also be eligible for federal and state historic preservation grant programs. Recognition as an NRHP listed battlefield can advance public understanding of and appreciation for the battlefield, and may encourage advocacy for its preservation.¹⁶

¹⁶ There are three levels of federal recognition for historic properties: Congressional designations such as national park units, National Historic Landmarks, and listings in the National Register of Historic Places. Congress creates national park units. The Secretary of the Interior designates National Historic Landmarks (NHL) – nationally significant historic sites – for their exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the nation's official list of cultural sites significant at the national, state, or local level and worthy of preservation. Historic units of the National Park System and NHLs are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Fort Ridgely is listed in the NRHP as an historic district for its contribution to U.S. history from 1850–1874. While the Civil War battle is discussed in the Fort Ridgely NRHP nomination, the nomination is for the fort itself and not for the battle specifically. The battlefield landscape merits its own listing in the NRHP inclusive of lands nominated in 1970 under the Fort Ridgely historic district. The 1,307 acres of the Study Area, all of which retain integrity, should be considered for inclusion in the NRHP as a battlefield landscape.

Wood Lake’s entire 1,774.99 acre Study Area retains integrity and 1,113.38 acres (63 percent) have been listed in the NRHP. The remaining 661.61 acres, 37 percent of the battlefield are not listed and should be considered for inclusion in the existing NRHP listing.

Table 3. Acres Registered Compared with Acres Potentially Eligible to be Registered				
Battlefield	Designation	ABPP PotNR Acres	Existing Registered Acres	Acres Potentially Eligible to be Registered
Fort Ridgely (MN001)	NRHP	1,307.13	409.68	819.63
Wood Lake (MN002)	NRHP	1,774.99	1,113.38	661.61

Stewardship

For the purposes of this update, “protected land” means battlefield land that is in public or private non-profit ownership, or is under permanent protective easement, and is managed specifically for 1) the purposes of maintaining the historic character of the landscape and for preventing future impairment or destruction of the landscape and historic features, or for 2) a conservation purpose and use compatible with the goals of historic landscape preservation.

The ABPP established this definition because, while public ownership of land often provides some level of protection for historic resources, it does not necessarily foreclose the potential for damage. Federal, state, and municipal ownership may prevent private development, and public ownership may require compliance with state and federal environmental laws, but the primary uses (military readiness, timber production, recreation, mineral extraction, impoundment, etc.) of that public land may not be compatible with the perpetual protection and appropriate management of a battlefield landscape.

The Minnesota Historical Society owns one acre of land at **Wood Lake**, which is maintained as a roadside commemorative area. At **Fort Ridgely**, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources manages 649 acres within the 1,307 acre Study Area as Fort Ridgely State Park. The park is used primarily as a recreational facility. In agreement with the state park, 20 acres are administered by the Minnesota Historical Society as the Fort Ridgely Historic Site. The Minnesota Historical Society has given day-to-day operation of the historic site to the Nicolette County Historical Society.

The battlefields at both **Fort Ridgely** and **Wood Lake** would benefit from comprehensive planning to foster coordination among public owners, private non-profits, and private landowners to preserve the historic landscapes. Because so much of these battlefields are

in good condition, there is an excellent opportunity for additional protective measures such as easement purchases.

Landscape preservation efforts in other states have benefited greatly from the purchase of development rights in the form of conservation easements. Used in conjunction with or instead of a traditional fee simple purchase, conservation easements are one of the most successful preservation and stewardship tools available for protecting battlefields. This type of easement allows private property owners to keep their land while receiving tax benefits for donating the easement. The federal government provides income tax credits to private property owners who donate conservation easements that permanently protect historic land.

Today only 21 acres, 0.84 percent of Civil War battlefield land in Minnesota, is permanently protected for its historic significance.

Table 4. Protective Stewardship of Intact Battlefield Land

Battlefield	ABPP PotNR Acres	Permanently Protected Acres	Unprotected, Intact Acres Remaining
Fort Ridgely (MN001)	1,307.13	20.00*	1,287.13
Wood Lake (MN002)	1,774.99	1.00	1,773.99
Total	3,082.12	22.00	3,061.12

**While 649 acres of the Fort Ridgely battlefield are protected as part of Fort Ridgely State Park , only 20 acres are protected for their historic significance.*



Figure 5: The ruins and site of historic **Fort Ridgely** are administered by the Minnesota Historical Society as Fort Ridgely Historic Site. Photograph by Paul Hawke, 2007.

Public Access and Interpretation

In its questionnaire (see Appendix D), the ABPP asked battlefield stewards about the types of public access and interpretation available at the battlefield. The ABPP did not collect information about the purpose or intent of the interpretation and access, such as whether a wayside exhibit was developed for purely educational reasons, to promote heritage tourism, or to boost local economic development.

The ABPP asked respondents to indicate the type of interpretation available at or about the battlefield. The categories included brochures, driving tours, living history demonstrations, maintained historic features or areas, walking tours and trails, wayside exhibits, websites, and other specialized programs. The results indicate that both of the Civil War battlefields in Minnesota offer some degree of public interpretation.

There is limited interpretation at **Wood Lake**. The Minnesota Historical Society maintains a one-acre wayside exhibit. The pull-off includes a stone commemorative obelisk and interpretive markers. In addition, there is a brochure of the battle provided by the Wood Lake Battlefield Preservation Association and an easement on 54 acres of the battlefield that allows self-guided tours to a portion of the battle terrain.

At **Fort Ridgely** the Fort Ridgely Historic Site contains the historic fort, which is the focus of interpretation of the battle. Numerous interpretive markers and a visitor center tell the story of the battle and the combatants.

Additional details regarding the interpretation activities undertaken at the two battlefields are included in the Individual Battlefield Profiles section of this report.



Figure 6: Interpretive ground markers showing the directional locations of both U.S. troops and Sioux warriors during the battle of **Fort Ridgely**. The Fort Ridgely Historic Site has numerous interpretive areas that allow visitors to discover and explore the history of the fort and the battle.

Advocacy

Nonprofit organizations play important roles in protecting historic battlefields. These organizations step in to preserve historic sites when public funding and management for historic preservation are absent. When public funding is available, nonprofits serve as vital partners in public-private preservation efforts, acting as conduits for public funds, raising critical private matching funds, keeping history and preservation in the public eye, and working with landowners to find ways to protect battlefield parcels.

Both battlefields in Minnesota have local advocacy friends groups. The Friends of Fort Ridgely supports the state park operations and advocates for **Fort Ridgely** battlefield lands inside the state park boundary. The Wood Lake Battlefield Preservation Association advocates for preservation of the entire battlefield at **Wood Lake**. It is involved in educating the community, commemorating the battle, and working toward the protection and restoration of the battlefield landscape.

While other organizations with more general historical interests may also play important roles in preserving Minnesota's battlefields, these two groups are the only known local organizations in Minnesota dedicated *solely* to the goals of Civil War battlefield preservation.



Figure 7: A one acre pull off on the **Wood Lake** battlefield commemorates the battle.

Individual Battlefield Profiles

Battlefield Profile Glossary

Location	County or city in which the battlefield is located.
Campaign	Name of military campaign of which the battle was part. Campaign names are taken from <i>The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies</i> .
Battle Date(s)	Day or days upon which the battle took place, as determined by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission.
Principal Commanders	Ranking commanders of opposing forces during the battle.
Forces Engaged	Name or description of largest units engaged during the battle.
Results	Indicates battle victor or inconclusive outcome.
Study Area	Acreage determined by the ABPP to represent the full extent of land associated with the historic battle.
Potential National Register Lands	Acreage of land that retains historic character and may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
Protected Lands	Estimated acreage (based on questionnaires and GIS) of battlefield land that is in public or private non-profit ownership, or is under permanent protective easement, and is managed specifically for 1) the purposes of maintaining the historic character of the landscape and for preventing future impairment or destruction of the landscape and historic features, or for 2) a conservation purpose and use compatible with the goals of historic landscape preservation.
Publicly Accessible Lands	Estimated acreage (based on responses to questionnaires) within the Study Area maintained for public visitation.
Management Area	Name of historic site, park, or other area maintained for battlefield resource protection and/or public visitation.
Friends Group(s)	Name of local advocacy organization(s) that support preservation activities at/for the battlefield.
Preservation Activities Since 1993	Indicates which types of preservation activities have taken place at the battlefield since 1993 (based on responses to questionnaires).
Public Interpretation Since 1993	Indicates which types of interpretation/educational activities have taken place at the battlefield since 1993 (based on responses to questionnaires).
Condition Statement	The ABPP's assessment of the overall condition of the battlefield's Study Area (based on field surveys and responses to questionnaires).
Historical Designation	Notes the most prestigious federal historical designation the battlefield has received (i.e. national park unit, National Historic Landmark, or National Register of Historic Places).

Fort Ridgely (MN001)

Location	Nicolett County
Campaign	Operations to Suppress the Sioux Uprising
Battle Date(s)	August 20, 22, 1862
Principal Commanders	1 st Lieutenant Timothy J. Sheehan [US]; Chief Little Crow [I]
Forces Engaged	Company B and Company C (detachment), Fifth Minnesota Infantry, Renville Rangers, refugee civilians [US]; Santee Sioux [I]
Results	Union victory
Study Area	<p>1,307.13 acres</p> <p>The CWSAC did not delineate a Study or Core Area in 1993. The newly drawn Study and Core Areas represent the fighting in two separate attacks on the fort (August 20 and 22).</p> <p>The Study Area includes the Sioux approach route from the west, and the areas of maneuver to the north, south, and east utilized by the Sioux after they split their forces to attack the fort. The site of the road used by the Federals to reinforce and supply the fort between the two attacks has also been included to the east.</p> <p>The newly drawn Core Area includes the site of Fort Ridgely, the areas of assault against the fort, and the ravines used by the Sioux for cover.</p>
Potential National Register Lands	1,307.13 acres
Protected Lands	<p>20.00 acres</p> <p>State of Minnesota, fee simple</p>
Publicly Accessible Lands	<p>649.85 acres</p> <p>State of Minnesota</p>
Management Area(s)	
Friends Group(s)	Friends of Fort Ridgely, (2001)
Preservation Activities Since 1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Advocacy ✓ Cultural Resource Surveys and Inventories Fundraising ✓ Interpretation Projects ✓ Land or Development Rights Purchased ✓ Legislation ✓ Planning Projects ✓ Research and Documentation
Public Interpretation Since 1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Brochure(s) Driving Tour Living History ✓ Maintained Historic Features/Areas ✓ Visitor Center ✓ Walking Tour/Trails ✓ Wayside Exhibits/Signs Website Other

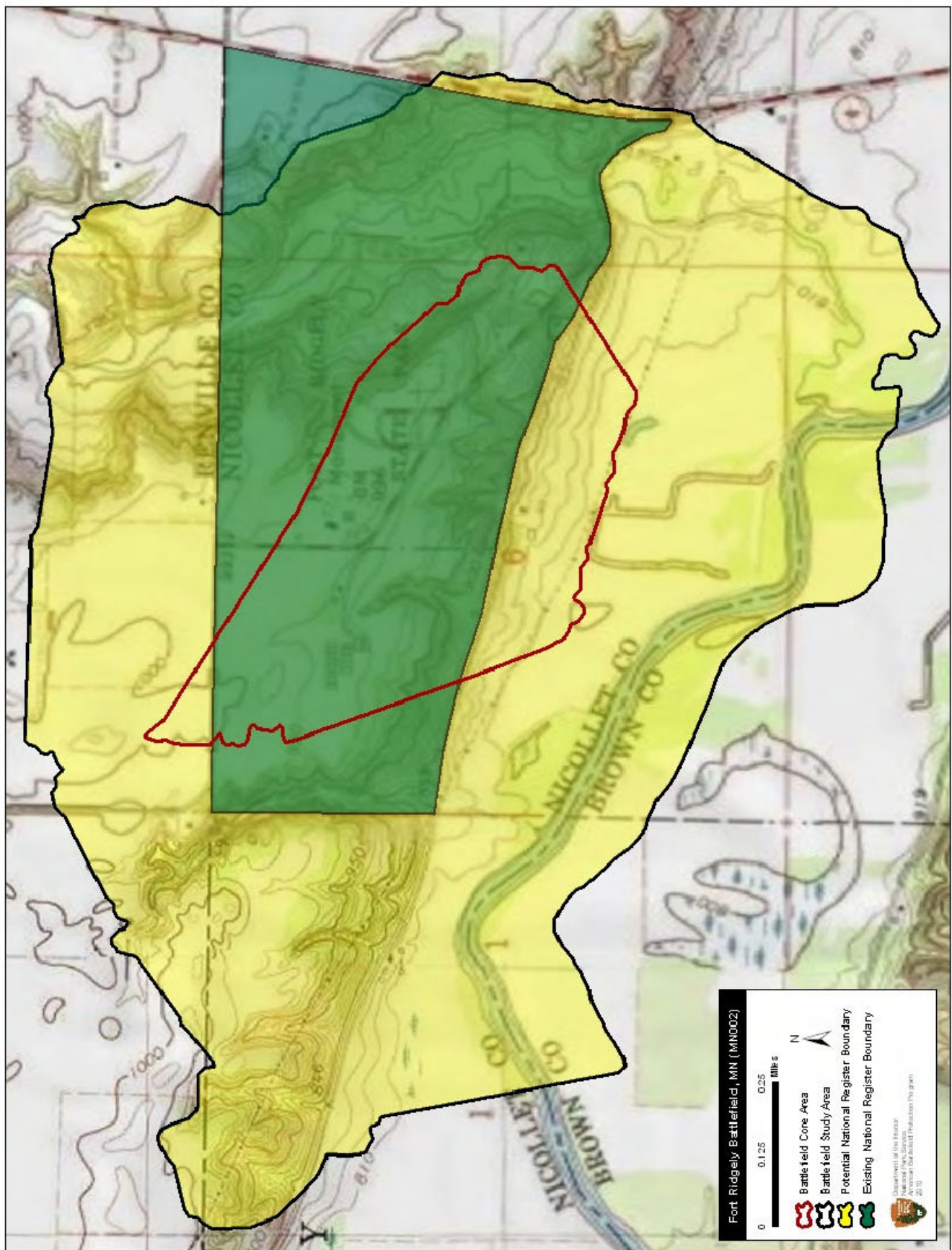
Condition Statement

Fort Ridgely is in very good condition. Some residential development has occurred, but the main threat to battlefield lands outside of Fort Ridgely State Park is increased gravel and kaolin mining. New mines are planned within the Study Area and could decimate portions of the landscape. Within the state park reconstruction of a 1927 9-hole golf course and other recreational development and use are not compatible with maintaining an historic battlefield landscape and may result in damage to the battlefield terrain and archeological resources.

The **Fort Ridgely** battlefield would benefit from comprehensive planning to foster coordination among public owners, private non-profits, and private landowners to preserve the historic landscapes. A portion of the Study Area is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); however, the nomination is for the fort itself and not for the battle specifically. The entire 1,307 acre Study Area should be considered for inclusion in the NRHP as a battlefield landscape.

Historical Designation

National Register of Historic Places (Fort Ridgely, 1970)



Wood Lake (MN002)

Location	Yellow Medicine County
Campaign	Operations to Suppress the Sioux Uprising (1862)
Battle Date(s)	September 23, 1862
Principal Commanders	Colonel Henry Hastings Sibley [US]; Chief Little Crow [I]
Forces Engaged	6 th Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, other volunteers [US]; Santee Sioux [I]
Results	Union Victory
Study Area	<p>1,193.91 acres</p> <p>The CWSAC did not delineate a Study or Core Area in 1993. The newly drawn Study Area includes the Federal encampment, the Sioux positions during their surprise attack, the areas of maneuver to the north, west, and southwest utilized by the Sioux, and the area of maneuver to the east and southeast utilized by the Federals.</p> <p>The newly drawn Core Area includes seasonal Wood Lake (which contained water at the time of the battle), the forward portion of the Federal encampment, the Federal artillery positions and fields of fire, the areas containing the Federal line of battle north of the encampment, and the bluffs used by the Sioux as high ground on which to form a line of battle.</p>
Potential National Register Lands	1,193.91 acres
Protected Lands	1.00 acre, Minnesota Historical Society, fee simple
Publicly Accessible Lands	1.00 acre, Minnesota Historical Society, fee simple
Management Area(s)	None
Friends Group(s)	Wood Lake Battlefield Preservation Association (2006)
Preservation Activities Since 1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Advocacy Cultural Resource Surveys and Inventories ✓ Fundraising Interpretation Projects Land or Development Rights Purchased Legislation Planning Projects ✓ Research and Documentation
Public Interpretation Since 1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Brochure(s) Driving Tour Living History Maintained Historic Features/Areas Visitor Center Walking Tour/Trails ✓ Wayside Exhibits/Signs ✓ Website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.wlbpa.info Other

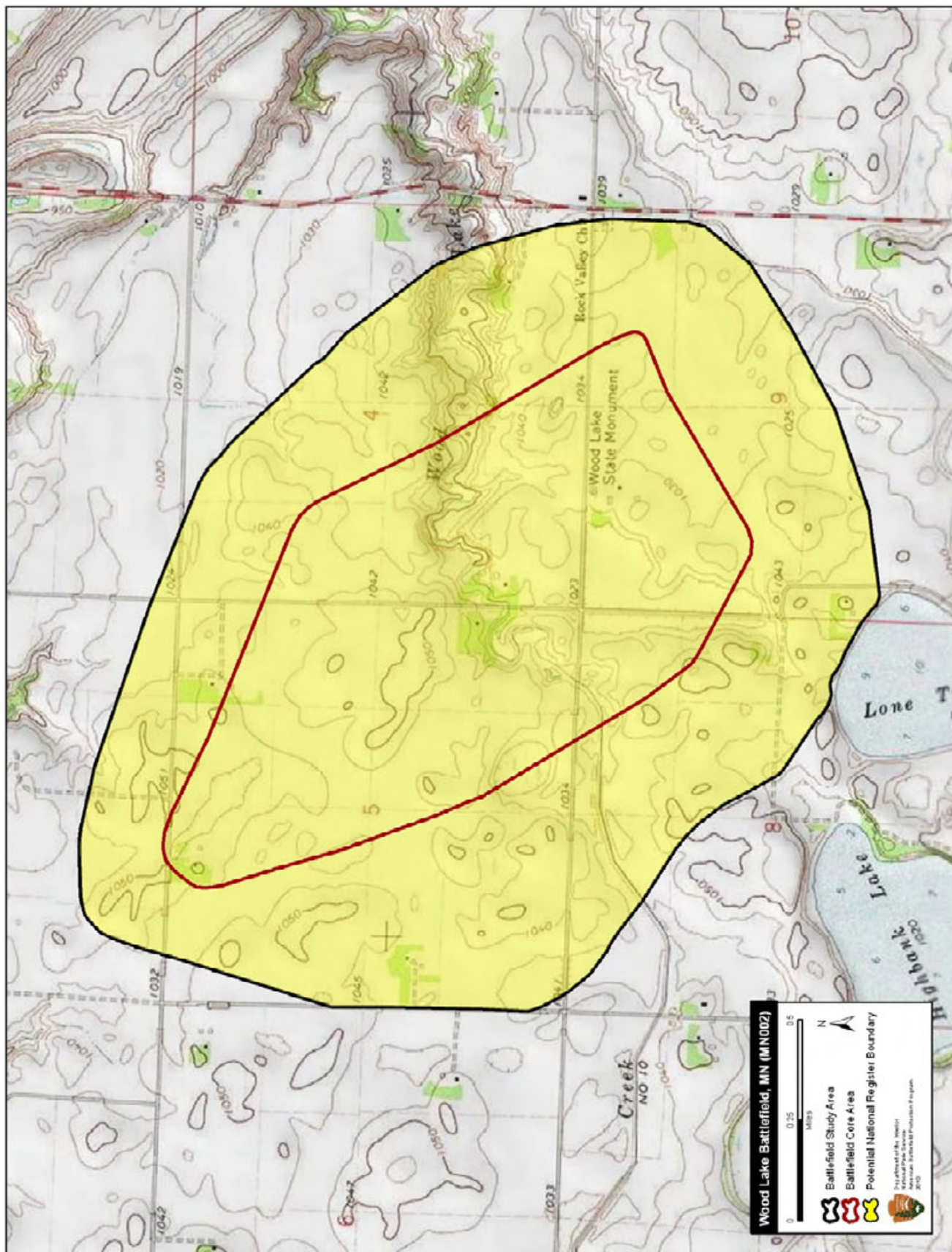
Condition Statement

Overall, **Wood Lake** is in excellent condition. The battlefield is primarily farm land with a few houses and farm buildings scattered throughout. Historic views are easy to see and understand. Most of the battlefield's defining features, such as the bluffs occupied by the Sioux and the seasonal lakebed, are extant. Subdivision of large farms into smaller parcels, however, could pose a long term threat to the battlefield.

The **Wood Lake** battlefield would benefit from comprehensive planning to foster coordination among public owners, private non-profits, and private landowners to preserve the historic landscapes. While 63 percent of the Study Area has recently been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the ABPP recommends that the remaining 37 percent be considered an eligible battlefield resource for purposes of planning and Section 106 compliance.

Historical Designation

National Register of Historic Places (Wood Lake Battlefield Historic District, 2010)



Note: The Wood Lake Battlefield National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) boundary is not represented on this map. The boundary data is restricted by the NRHP.

Appendices

Appendix A. Civil War Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants

In 1998, the ABPP began its land acquisition grant program, which helps states and local communities purchase significant Civil War battlefield lands for permanent protection. In 2002, Congress officially authorized the program.¹⁷ Eligible battlefields are those listed in the 1993 *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* prepared by the Congressionally-chartered CWSAC. Eligible acquisition projects may be for fee interest in land or for a protective interest such as a perpetual easement.

Congress has appropriated a total of \$34.9 million for this Civil War Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants. These grants have assisted in the permanent protection of 14,741 acres at 59 Civil War battlefields in 14 states. Although there have been no applicants for these grants from the State of Minnesota, both of the battlefields profiled in this report are eligible to receive funding.

¹⁷ The Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002 (PL 107- 359) amended the American Battlefield Protection Act of 1996 (16 USC 469k) to authorize the land acquisition grants.

Appendix B. American Battlefield Protection Program Planning Grants

Through its American Battlefield Protection Program, the Federal government also provides grants and technical advice to communities working to preserve battlefields. The ABPP has two grant programs: planning grants and land acquisition grants.

Since 1992, the ABPP has offered annual planning grants to nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and local, regional, state, and tribal governments to help protect battlefields located on American soil. Applicants are encouraged to work with partner organizations and federal, State, and local government agencies as early as possible to integrate their efforts into a larger battle site protection strategy. To date, **Wood Lake** battlefield has received two ABPP grants totaling \$89,478.00. Both of the battlefields profiled in this report are eligible for funding.

Grantee	Year	Project Title	Award
Woodlake Battlefield Preservation Association	2008	Documentation/Archeology	\$42,478.00
Woodlake Battlefield Preservation Association	2010	Historic Preservation Plan	\$47,000.00
Total			\$89,478.00

Appendix C. Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002

Public Law 107-359, 111 Stat. 3016, 17 December 2002

Amends the American Battlefield Protection Program Act of 1996 (16 U.S.C. 469k)

An Act

To amend the American Battlefield Protection Act of 1996 to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a battlefield acquisition grant program.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) Findings.--Congress finds the following

(1) Civil War battlefields provide a means for the people of the United States to understand a tragic period in the history of the United States.

(2) According to the Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields, prepared by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, and dated July 1993, of the 384 principal Civil War battlefields--

(A) almost 20 percent are lost or fragmented;

(B) 17 percent are in poor condition; and

(C) 60 percent have been lost or are in imminent danger of being fragmented by development and lost as coherent historic sites.

(b) Purposes.--The purposes of this Act are--

(1) to act quickly and proactively to preserve and protect nationally significant Civil War battlefields through conservation easements and fee-simple purchases of those battlefields from willing sellers; and

(2) to create partnerships among State and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and enhance nationally significant Civil War battlefields.

SEC. 3. BATTLEFIELD ACQUISITION GRANT PROGRAM.

The American Battlefield Protection Act of 1996 (16 U.S.C. 469k) is amended--

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as paragraph (3) of subsection (c), and indenting appropriately;

(2) in paragraph (3) of subsection (c) (as redesignated by paragraph (1))--

(A) by striking "Appropriations" and inserting "appropriations"; and

(B) by striking "section" and inserting "subsection";

(3) by inserting after subsection (c) the following

“(d) Battlefield Acquisition Grant Program.--

“(1) Definitions.--In this subsection

“(A) Battlefield report.--The term ‘Battlefield Report’ means the document entitled ‘Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields’, prepared by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, and dated July 1993.

“(B) Eligible entity.--The term ‘eligible entity’ means a State or local government.

“(C) Eligible site.--The term ‘eligible site’ means a site--

“(i) that is not within the exterior boundaries of a unit of the National Park System; and

“(ii) that is identified in the Battlefield Report.

“(D) Secretary.--The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the American Battlefield Protection Program.

“(2) Establishment.--The Secretary shall establish a battlefield acquisition grant program under which the Secretary may provide grants to eligible entities to pay the Federal share of the cost of acquiring interests in eligible sites for the preservation and protection of those eligible sites.

“(3) Nonprofit partners.--An eligible entity may acquire an interest in an eligible site using a grant under this subsection in partnership with a nonprofit organization.

“(4) Non-federal share.--The non-Federal share of the total cost of acquiring an interest in an eligible site under this subsection shall be not less than 50 percent.

“(5) Limitation on land use.--An interest in an eligible site acquired under this subsection shall be subject to section 6(f)(3) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 460l-8(f)(3)).

“(6) Reports.--

“(A) In general.--Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the activities carried out under this subsection.

“(B) Update of battlefield report.--Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that updates the Battlefield Report to reflect--

“(i) preservation activities carried out at the 384 battlefields during the period between publication of the Battlefield Report and the update;

“(ii) changes in the condition of the battlefields during that period; and

“(iii) any other relevant developments relating to the battlefields during that period.

“(7) Authorization of appropriations.--

“(A) In general.--There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to provide grants under this subsection \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2004

through 2008.

“(B) Update of battlefield report.--There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out paragraph (6)(B), \$500,000.”; and

(4) in subsection (e)--

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “as of” and all that follows through the period and inserting “on September 30, 2008.”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “and provide battlefield acquisition grants” after “studies”.

-end-

Appendix D. Battlefield Questionnaire

State
Battlefield

Person Completing Form
Date of completion

I. Protected Lands of the Battlefield ("Protected lands" are these "owned" for historic preservation or conservation purposes. Please provide information on land protected since 1993.)

1) Identify protected lands by parcel since 1993. Then answer these questions about each parcel, following example in the chart below. What is the acreage of each parcel? Is parcel owned fee simple, by whom? Is there is an easement, if so name easement holder? Was the land purchased or the easement conveyed after 1993? What was cost of purchase or easement? What was source of funding and the amount that source contributed? Choose from these possible sources: Coin money, LWCF, Farm Bill, State Government, Local Government, Private Owner, Private Non-Profit (provide name), or Other (describe).

Parcel	Acres	Owner	Easement	Year	Cost	Source
Joe Smith Farm	194	Private	SHPO	1995	\$500,000	LWCF/\$250,000 Private/\$250,000
Sue Jones Tract	16	Battlefield Friends, Inc.	No	2002	\$41,000	State/\$20,000 BFI/\$21,000

2) Other public or non-profit lands within the battlefield? (Y/N)

- If yes, describe
- Name of public or non-profit owner or easement holder
- Number of Acres owned/held

3) Is the information in a GIS? (Y/N)

If yes, may NPS obtain a copy of the data? (Y/N)

II. Preservation Groups

Is there a formal interested entity (friends group, etc) associated with the battlefield? (Y/N)

If yes

Name

Address

Phone

Fax

E-mail

Web site? (Y/N)

If yes, what is the URL?

Does the web site have a preservation message? (Y/N)

What year did the group form?

III. Public Access and Interpretation

1) Does the site have designated Public Access? (Y/N) (Count public roads if there are designated interpretive signs or pull-offs)

If yes, what entity provides the public access (Access may occur on lands owned *in fee* or *under easement* to the above entities)

☐

Federal government

☐

State government

☐

Local government

☐

Private Nonprofit organization

☐

Private owner

☐

Other

Name of entity (if applicable)

Number of Acres Accessible to the Public (size of the area in which the public may physically visit without trespassing. Do not include viewsheds.)

2) Does the site have interpretation? (Y/N)

If yes, what type of interpretation is available?

☐

Visitor Center

☐

Brochure(s)

☐

Wayside exhibits

☐

Driving Tour

☐

Walking Tour

☐

Audio tour tapes

☐

Maintained historic features/areas

☐

Living History

☐

Website

☐

Other

IV. Registration

Applies only to the battlefield landscape, not to individual contributing features of a battlefield (i.e., the individually listed Dunker Church property of .2 acres does not represent the Antietam *battlefield* for the purposes of this exercise)

1) Is the site a designated National Historic Landmark? (Y/N)

If yes, NHL and ID Number

2) Is the site listed in the National Register? (Y/N)

If yes, NRHP Name and ID Number

3) Is the site listed in the State Register? (Y/N)

If yes, State Register Name and ID Number

- 4) Is the site in the State Inventory? (Y/N)
If yes, State Inventory Name and ID Number
- 5) Is the site designated as a local landmark or historic site? (Y/N)
Type of Designation/Listing

V. Program Activities

What types of preservation program activities have occurred at the battlefield? Provide final product name and date if applicable (e.g., *Phase I Archeological Survey Report on the Piper Farm*, 1994 and *Antietam Preservation Plan*, 2001, etc.)

- 1) Research and Documentation
- 2) Cultural Resource surveys and inventories (building/structure and landscape inventories, archeological surveys, landscape surveys, etc.)
- 3) Planning Projects (preservation plans, site management plans, cultural landscape reports, etc.)
- 4) Interpretation Projects (also includes education)
- 5) Advocacy (any project meant to engage the public in a way that would benefit the preservation of the site, e.g. PR, lobbying, public outreach, petitioning for action, etc.)
- 6) Legislation (any local, state, or federal legislation designed to encourage preservation of the battlefield individually or together with other similar sites)
- 7) Fundraising
 - a. To support program activities?
 - b. To support land acquisition/easements?
- 8) Other